

Serbia and Montenegro

by
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Geography Project 4

LOCATION



The Union of Serbia and Montenegro, formerly known as Yugoslavia, is located in the Balkan Peninsula, in south-eastern Europe. It borders Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina on the west, Hungary on the north, Romania and Bulgaria on the east, Albania and Macedonia on the south, and Montenegro has about 200 kilometers of shoreline on the Adriatic Sea. Its borders contain just over 102,000 square kilometers of land.



TOPOGRAPHY



The topography of Serbia and Montenegro is highly varied. Northern Serbia contains part of the large agricultural region known as the Pannonian Plains. This area is hilly, but is of excellent soil quality. Many rivers also run through the plains, keeping everything well watered. Throughout southern Serbia and Montenegro however, the terrain is much more mountainous. The Balkan mountain range rises in the southwest, while the Dinaric Alps cover the southwest, making for a very high shoreline and a complete absence of islands off of Montenegro's coast. Throughout both mountain ranges however, there are many rivers and fertile valleys.

CLIMATE

The local climate is mainly a blend between two distinct climates. Northern and eastern Serbia are affected by the temperate European Continental climate, while Montenegro and southern Serbia are influenced by a Mediterranean climate which is greatly affected by the Dinaric and Balkan mountain ranges.

The temperature during the summer is generally fairly low, averaging in the low and mid 20's during the warmest months of July and August. The winter is rather mild however, with the mercury only dropping slightly below zero during the coldest month, January. Naturally, the higher altitudes average a lower temperature than the lower areas. Precipitation is mainly affected by altitude. The valleys and plains generally receive between 600-700 millimeters of rain per year, while the higher areas have up to 1500 millimeters per year.



GOVERNMENT

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Serbia and Montenegro share a central government located in Belgrade. This consists of a 126-member parliament, an Assembly, and a council of ministers, which oversee foreign affairs, defence, international economic cooperation, internal economic relations, and human and minority rights. The Court of Serbia and Montenegro is the court shared between Serbia and Montenegro, and rules on the validity of legislature, and settles any disputes between the governments in both Serbia and Montenegro.

FLAG



COAT-OF-ARMS



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Serbia and Montenegro are also both complete republics which have a full governmental system of their own. These consist of legislative, judicial, and executive organizations, which manage the vast majority of the individual republic's functions.



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INDUSTRY

Industry is rather limited, the economy having been nearly destroyed during the Milosevic (the president of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) era. Nevertheless, several industries managed to survive, and are now growing again. Mining is one of the most important, with some of Europe's largest reserves of copper located in Serbia. Coal, bauxite, lead, and zinc also remain in large deposits. Electronics, machines, chemicals, petroleum, and various consumer goods are also made.



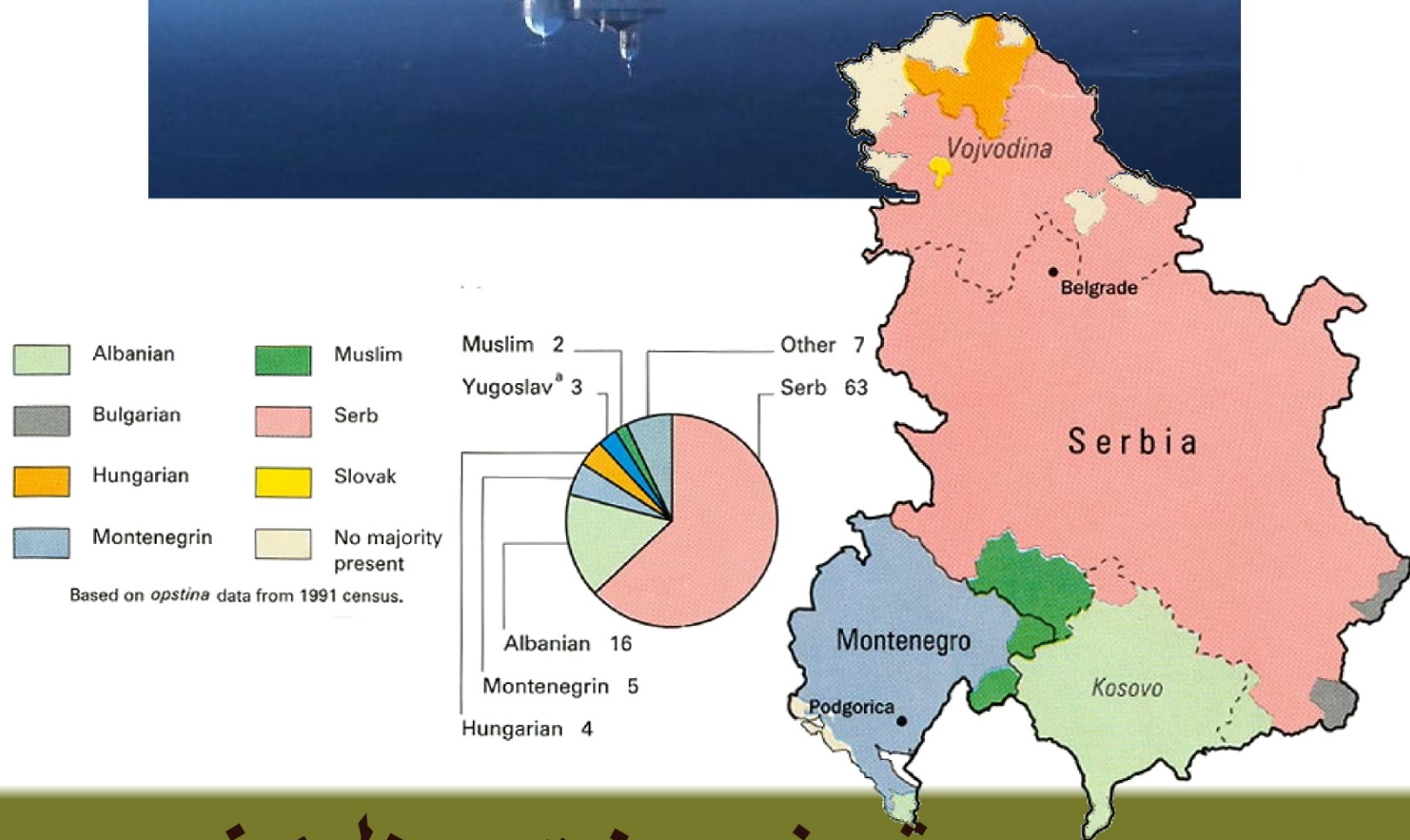
Agriculture is central to the economy. Over 25% of the workforce is employed in this sector, making it the largest slice of the meager economic pie. The Pannonian plains region is the most fertile section of the nation, so the majority of farming takes place there. Most of the agriculture takes the form of growing various cereals, though potatoes, grapes, and plums are also popular. Cattle, pigs, and sheep are raised as well.

AGRICULTURE



RELIGION

The religion of Serbia and Montenegro, like everything else, is rather mixed. Orthodox Christians account for about seventy percent of the total population. Muslims, mostly ethnic Albanians in the Sandzak region, follow with nearly twenty percent. Catholics, about four percent of the population, are mixed throughout the whole population, as are the other various religions.



يمنية فخر غتظف

HOUSING



Housing is generally a typical Continental or Mediterranean European style, depending on the location. Naturally, newer buildings are designed in a more modern style, with more modern materials.



Clothing is mostly in the European fashion, though remnants of the old communistic influence of uniformity still linger in the region, gradually becoming less pronounced as time moves on.

CLOTHING

FOOD

Serbs and Montenegrins are known for their love of meat. Kebabs, steaks, pork, liver, sausage, and rissoles are all common fare. Fruits also are important to their diet, with plums, grapes, apples, and other fruits being staple products. Montenegrin beer and a brandy known as Rakija commonly water the tastebuds.



EDUCATION

For those between the ages of 7 and 14 education is compulsory, but paid for by the state. Only about two-thirds of children actually attend however.

The University of Belgrade is the nation's main institute of higher learning, but other fairly large universities are also located in five other cities. Unfortunately, many universities were greatly harmed during the Milosovic period, when they were forced to follow harmful state

regulations. They are gradually recovering now however, with their increased freedom allowing an honest pursuit of knowledge.



health care

The overall health of the population is deteriorating, with the pervasiveness of malnutrition, smoking, alcohol, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis substantially increasing. An estimated thirty percent of all deaths are directly or indirectly related to smoking. Health care is also substantially worse than it was a decade ago, the result of NATO bombings and delays of medical shipments while under the UN embargo.

The quality health care has both upsides and downsides. On one hand, every region has at least one health-care facility. They are fairly well staffed, with a doctor-to-nurse ration of 1:3. There are about four beds per thousand people in Montenegro, and just under 3 in Serbia: only slightly under the World Health Organization's recommended number. On the other hand, the facilities and equipment are rather low in quality, and are deteriorating. Even though health care is partly paid for by a public health insurance fund, supplemented by patient payments, many patients are forced to make "unofficial" payments to receive the care they need.

The arts, entertainment, & leisure

The entire Balkan region is known for its talent in brass bands, neofolk, and folk music. Well known brass and folk bands include Saban Bajramovic, Fanfare Ciocarlia, Goran Bregovic, and Emir Kusturica & The No Smoking Orchestra. A very popular genre is known as novokomponovana, an urbanized style of folk that has influenced many bands, notably Saban Saulic, Miroslav Ilic, and Dragana Mirkovic. Turbo-folk is another well known (though much degraded) genre, basically a combination of neofolk with rock, house, and soul.

Much of the art is characterized by political and social themes: after the breakdown of Social Realism, fantasy, surrealism, figurativism, and abstractism took hold, but the political undertones remained. Dado Djuric, Mladen Srbinovic, Radomir Reljic, and Dusan Otasevic are all at least somewhat characterized by this theme.

Literature is largely unnoticed outside of the Balkans, though some have been influential. Milovan Djilas gained international recognition through a book entitled "The New Class", which criticized the communistic system he had helped to create. Ivo Andric won a Nobel Prize for "Drini Cuprija", focusing on the need for people of differing religions to unite.

Local films have greatly increased in number in the past few years, mostly due to the phenomenal work of Emir Kusturica and Goran Paskaljevic, both of whom have received international awards for their movies. Like the literature and music, many of the films also centre on political and social issues.

Sports are extremely popular, with soccer (properly known as football) and basketball being the most popular. There are currently a total of seventeen city clubs, and one club representing the nation. Many different quality basketball teams exist as well, with the national team even winning the World Basketball Championships in 1998. Other popular sports include volleyball and waterpolo.

